

## REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8-10 remain in this application, claim 7 is canceled, and new claim 11 is added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 2, 3, 5, and 6 are amended above in the manner suggested by the Examiner in section 3 on page 2 of the Office Action.

Claim 7 is canceled above, and the objection set forth in section 4 on page 2 of the Office Action is moot.

Claim 5 is amended above to more particularly define the structure illustrated by way of example in Figure 2b of this application, while claim 11 is added to more particularly define the structure illustrated by way of example in Figure 2a.

Each of independent claims 1 and 8-10 is rejected as being anticipated by either U.S. Patent 5,934,073 to Gieshoff et al. or U.S. Patent 3,736,105 to Tourtellotte et al. Reconsideration is requested, however, since neither the Gieshoff auxiliary heating system nor the Tourtellotte et al. muffler includes a reactor comprising, in addition to the other elements specified, a catalyst-containing region which forms a partition between a first part-chamber and a second part-chamber comprising a nonwoven material which is shapeable so as to easily match desired geometries and which has a catalyst material embedded therein as each of claims 1 and 8-10 requires.

The Examiner refers specifically to Figure 2 of the Gieshoff et al. patent in section 6 on pages 3-4 of the Office Action. As discussed in column 6, lines 20-21 of

the Gieshoff et al. patent, Figure 2 of that patent illustrates a catalyst 4' consisting of a ceramic foam carrier in the form of a hollow cylinder 6. Monolithic catalysts with an open-pore filter structure such as foam materials, networks or fiber structures having irregular flow paths, honeycomb catalysts with flow paths in the form of parallel, alternatingly plugged flow channels, and honeycomb elements with flow channels which are open on both sides are also discussed in column 4, lines 20-30 of the Gieshoff et al. patent. Nothing in either of these portions of the Gieshoff et al. patent disclosure, however, suggests that the Gieshoff et al. system utilizes a nonwoven material which is shapeable so as to easily match desired geometries and which has a catalyst material embedded therein.

Lines 14-27 in column 3 of the Tourtellotte et al. patent explicitly provide that the Tourtellotte et al. bed 7 consists of discrete particles of a suitable catalyst, catalytic agent, or formulation, while lines 48-51 in the same column of the Tourtellotte et al. patent similarly provide that catalyst bed 11 is provided with a plurality of discrete particles of an active catalytic agent. Neither of these sections of the Tourtellotte et al. patent suggests that the Tourtellotte et al. muffler utilizes a nonwoven material which is shapeable so as to easily match desired geometries and which has a catalyst material embedded therein.

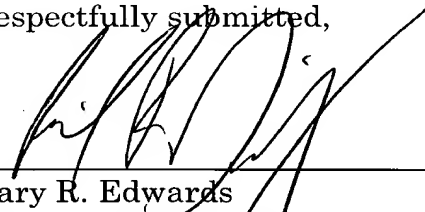
Again, as discussed above, neither the Gieshoff auxiliary heating system nor the Tourtellotte et al. muffler includes a reactor comprising, in addition to the other elements specified, a catalyst-containing region which forms a partition between a first part-chamber and a second part-chamber comprising a nonwoven material

which is shapeable so as to easily match desired geometries and which has a catalyst material embedded therein as each of claims 1 and 8-10 requires. It follows, therefore, that none of claims 1 and 8-10 is anticipated by either the Gieshoff et al. patent or the Tourtellotte et al. patent. U.S. Patent 3,953,176 to Santala et al., which is relied on in section 11 on pages 6-7 of the Office Action to reject claim 5, does not suggest modifying either the Gieshoff et al. or the Tourtellotte et al. disclosure such that the limitations referred to are met, and it is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1 and 8-10 is patentable. The remaining, dependent claims of this application are patentable as well.

This application is now in condition for allowance for reasons discussed above. Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,



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